

## HOSPITALS AND PRISONS, OLD AND NEW

Prevention is the Basis of the Modern Gospel Governing All of Our Social Institutions

EDWARD T. DEVINE,  
Secretary New York Charity Organization Society.  
(Exclusive Service The Survey Press Bureau.)

Hospitals of an earlier day, like prisons and other institutions in which people were crowded without proper safeguards, sometimes became centers of infection. Skilled medical attendance was provided, but good nursing, isolation rooms, and sanitary cleanliness were wanting. Then Florence Nightingale announced the clarifying doctrine that hospitals, whatever else they do, should not make people sick. From this negative but fruitful axiom, there came as logical corollaries the essential conditions of a good hospital. The principle which redeemed the hospital is one which is capable of application to other institutions.

The most obvious analogy to the principle that hospitals should not make people sick, is that prisons should not make criminals. There is much evidence of the need for applying this negative but elementary doctrine. Prisons and jails which receive convicts for brief, definite sentences, permit the reproduction of the criminal tendency. They pervert the very principle of their existence. They spread the infection of crime, even as the perverted hospital spreads the infection of disease. The reformatory has its legitimate and necessary place in the penal system. So has the colony in which, as in a hospital for the insane, incorrigible enemies of society may be permanently isolated. But the prison which represents merely the idea of vengeance and punishment is hard put to it to justify its existence at all. And when it makes criminals of its inmates the balance against it becomes grievously heavy.

The police system should not create hostility towards the representatives of law and order. The police drag-net, which on the assassination of a police officer brings into court innocent and law abiding laborers, is calculated to produce just such an effect. Needless clubbing and other brutality have this effect. This attitude of hostility is natural for the small merchant, who is not protected against criminal blackmail, and for the Italian laborer, who, in despair of such police protection as he has enjoyed in his own country, arms himself with knife or revolver, only to find that this is more certain to be punished than the "blackhand" outrage against which it was intended to be a protection. Unjustified arrest, third degree, the protection of criminals for pay, and other perversions of the police power, are on a par with the crime-making prison, and the insanitary, disease-breeding hospital.

Charity should not make paupers. Here again we have an application of the general principle that should prove very useful in testing the value of the work of charitable societies, and the wisdom of the practices of the workers of individuals who think themselves charitable. Strength and not comfort is the end which we should rank highest among the good things which we can do for those who are in need. Charity is to relieve distress, as the police system is to prevent crime, but

it is equally essential that it should guard effectively against the perversion of its function. It must not itself multiply the occasions for its exercises. Excessive hours of labor, underpay, irregular employment, throwing men out of employment as a first resort in periods of business retrenchment, displacing workers at the first sign of advancing age by young men because of their extra strength and pliability, are among the features of industry which may be regarded not unfairly as perversions of its natural function. They tend to make men unemployed, which is the very destruction of industry. Goods must be produced, and transported, and placed on the market, and sold, but all this should be done in such a way as to conserve the usefulness of those who do the work, not in such a way as to destroy their usefulness.

There should not make its pupils inefficient. The function of education is to pass on to the growing generation the accumulated achievements of the race. Its aim is to put the next generation on the shoulders of the present both in respect to earning and producing capacity, and in respect to the moral and intellectual life. The school which makes mindless, either vocational or simply as living, rational human beings, compelled daily to choose between good and evil, and between the better and the worse, belongs with the hospital, the prison, the police system and the charity, which should not exhibit an excessive mortality. State labor departments should not neglect to make an intelligent report in regard to the factory conditions subject to their supervision. A federal investigation of the labor of women and children should not be unable to make reports of progress from time to time, like the bulletins of the Census Bureau, and thus be compelled to present its results in bulk long afterwards, when the facts upon which it is based are perhaps no longer of interest or value.

The perversion of social institutions is often more than the result of the wisdom of the practitioners. Those who ultimately pay the bills for their creation and maintenance have no desire that hospitals shall make people sick, or that prisons shall make criminals, or that charity shall make paupers, or that factories shall make workmen unemployed.

When Town Clerk Stagg asked, at the town meeting, that he be permitted to have a curb line established in front of his property on East Broadway, announcing that he was willing to pay all the expenses, permission was given.

In the case of Herbert Poole, who was charged in the indictment, that on the 8th of June at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, he did break into the house of Lizzie Altieri, and being found in said dwelling, did steal and carry away certain goods, etc., some mercy was shown by the judge, on the ground that the man has a wife and child, and if he should be sent to jail until next September, she would have to pay the rent and support herself. So Judge Peck continued the case and appointed Rev. C. S. Bullock probation officer for a month. The arrest was made by Frank Vielli, state policeman, and the amount stolen is said to be in the vicinity of \$20.

Frederick M. Newell of Stratford, this town, died on Thursday evening in the Bridgeport hospital. He leaves a wife and children, and was a member of the Shepherds of Bethlehem, and of the O. U. A. M.

Thomas Traband, guilty on three counts, of intoxication, abusive language and breach of the peace, was convicted, and sent to the cooler in default of bail and costs, amounting together to something like \$45. Yesterday he was usefully employed in cleaning up the grounds about the town house and the cooler, a job which has long needed the rake and spade of the scavenger.

Town Clerk Stagg was in New London yesterday attending a meeting of the Army and Navy Club at the Griswold House.

To-morrow in the Congregational Church, Rev. Joel S. Ives, secretary of the State Home Missionary Society, will preach in the absence of the pastor. The last meeting of the Christian Endeavor Society before next September will be held at 6:30 o'clock.

The young ladies who graduated on Thursday evening were Ruth Haven, Frances Blakeman, Dorothy Beardsley, Margaret Garry and Rachel Wilcoxson.

The Hartmann Brewing company has leased the land and buildings of John McDonald on Honeycreek.

Mr. C. D. Mills, who has large hot houses at Paradise Green, has just farmed \$3,000 carnations.

Tuesday evening one can get strawberries and cream at the Methodist church.

Recent visitors in town include Harold Goddard of Springfield, Cadence Cummings of Cold Water, Mich., J. Williams of New Haven, and a party of gentlemen and ladies from Kent, including Mrs. John J. McNeil, Gilbert Vincent, Miss Charles Eaton, Mrs. John Roberts, Miss Mary Hatch and the Misses K. M. and A. S. Hopson.

An uncle of Miss Frances Russell, the well known librarian, Mr. Edward Benjamin, has died out of town.

Mr. Charles Payne, who is passing the summer at Lordship Park, has recently received a new Ford automobile.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Beare have returned from a trip to Europe.

Miss Edna Samuels has been visiting in New York.

Miss Bertha Bartram, Miss Christine Welles, and Miss Marjorie Haven were among our local young ladies who took part in the piano recital given a day or two ago by the pupils of Miss Mary Louise Haven.

On August 4 it is proposed to give a lawn fete for the benefit of the Masonic Building fund. It will take place at the corner of Stratford avenue and Beardsley's lane.

Those who are interested in a reduction of fire insurance rates will be pleased to learn that Mr. R. C. Brown has written a letter to the School Board, in which he promises that an inspector will visit here next week and look over the condition of the schools since the new house has been purchased and the new house for the house has been built.

It is announced that the first public hearing of the joint committee, of representative citizens appointed at the last town meeting, and the School Board, will be held next Monday evening at the town hall. Every parent who has a child to educate, and who finds fault with the present system of education, should make it a point to be present and air his views. Old bachelors especially welcome. This meeting is one of a series intended to lead up to a settlement of the whole question and for the time being the Stove Club can adjourn to the town hall, and give the public the benefit of its wisdom.

## STRATFORD

Town Clerk Stagg—The Poole Case—  
Guilty on Three Counts—Home from  
College—What People Are Doing.

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